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General Assembly

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Fifty-sixth session
Agenda item 98 (f)
Environment and sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

Outcome of the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the General Assembly, pursuant to its decision 55/443 of 20 December 2000, the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.*

* The report was delayed in order to incorporate the outcome of the second part of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held from 16 to 27 July 2001.

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Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on protection of global climate change for present and future generations of mankind

1. The General Assembly, by decision 55/443 of 20 December 2000, requested the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to report to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The present report is submitted in response to that request.

I. Outcome of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties

2. The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held its fourth session at Buenos Aires, from 2 to 14 November 1998. It adopted the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (FCCC/CP/1998/16/Add.1, decision 7/CP.4), which consists of elements to strengthen the implementation of the Convention and complete modalities for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention. The Buenos Aires Plan of Action consists of six decisions, on:

(a) The Global Environment Facility, which was confirmed as an entity entrusted with operation of the financial mechanism of the Convention, to be reviewed at four-year intervals;

(b) The development and transfer of technology to developing countries, for which a consultative process was to be established to consider a list of specific issues and associated questions;

(c) Addressing the specific needs and concerns of developing countries arising from the adverse effects of climate change, including minimization of adverse impacts of the implementation of response measures;

(d) Activities implemented jointly under the pilot phase, which would include capacity-building, especially in developing countries that so far lacked experience;

(e) The development of the relevant rules, procedures and guidelines of the mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol;

(f) Preparations for the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol, including work related to compliance and to policies and measures for the mitigation of climate change. The sixth session of the Conference of the Parties was to be the deadline for the completion of work related to the Buenos Aires Plan of Action.

II. Outcome of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties

3. The fifth session of the Conference of the Parties was held at Bonn, Germany, from 25 October to 5 November 1999. The session advanced the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. Several countries called for the Kyoto Protocol to be ratified so that it could enter into force in 2002 as one of the markers of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002. New guidelines were adopted for the national communications by industrialized countries (Parties included in annex I to the Convention) and for the technical review of their inventories. These were important steps towards the degree of rigour that would be necessary under the Kyoto Protocol. In parallel, a new process was launched for the improvement of initial communications by developing countries (Parties not included in annex I to the Convention). The Consultative Group of Experts, composed of five experts from each of the developing country regions (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean), six experts from industrialized countries and three experts from organizations with relevant experience, was established. In addition, the Conference launched country-driven assessments of capacity-building needs for developing countries and countries with economies in transition, with a view to making the delivery of financial and technical support from existing resources more responsive to the evolving needs of those countries.

III. Outcome of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties

4. The first part of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties was held in The Hague, from 13 to 25 November 2000. Its outcome was inconclusive. The session was suspended and the President of the Conference was requested to seek advice on the desirability of resuming the session in order to complete the work on texts and adopt a comprehensive and balanced package of decisions on all issues covered by the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The President convened two informal high-level consultations in New York, on 20 and 21 April 2001, and at Scheveningen, The Hague on 27 and 28 June 2001. The meetings, which were attended by Governments at the ministerial level, provided comments on proposals made by the President. The second part of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties was held at Bonn, Germany from 16 to 27 July 2001. The core elements of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action were agreed upon by ministers at that session.

5. On the basis of the political agreement, draft decisions on elements to strengthen the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol were agreed and forwarded for adoption by the Conference at its seventh session. The need for more funding to assist developing countries in addressing climate change was recognized. Two new funds are to be established under the Convention and managed by the Global Environment Facility: a special fund to finance adaptation, transfer of technologies, emission reduction and assistance to developing country parties in diversifying their economies, and the fund to support the least developed countries in implementing the Convention, and in particular in addressing their adaptation needs. Another fund is to be established under the Kyoto Protocol, the adaptation fund, which is also to be managed by the Global Environment Facility and is to finance adaptation projects/programmes from the share of proceeds of the clean development mechanism (2 per cent of certified emission reductions) and from other sources of funding. Consensus was achieved on the framework for meaningful and effective actions for increasing and improving the transfer of and access to environmentally sound technologies and know-how, including activities relating to needs assessments, information, enabling environments, capacity-building and mechanisms for the transfer of technology. An expert group on the transfer of technology has been established to identify ways in which to facilitate and advance the activities identified in the framework. Activities related to adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change, as well as activities to address the negative impacts of climate change, are to be supported through several channels. Industrialized countries have committed themselves to strive to prevent or minimize adverse effects on developing countries in the course of taking action in relation to climate change.

6. The draft decisions for the Kyoto Protocol mechanisms on land use, land-use change and forestry and the compliance mechanism are not yet complete. They have been forwarded to the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held at Marrakech, Morocco, from 29 October to 9 November 2001, for completion and adoption. The draft decisions contain a workable set of rules for all three mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol. There is agreement on principles as a guide for land use, land-use change and forestry activities, with limits for the controlled use of sinks to meet initial targets, and it was agreed that credible and transparent accounting systems would be established. Parties have also agreed to establish a compliance committee, with a facilitative branch and an enforcement branch. The approach to compliance is to emphasize its facilitation and promotion. Consequences of non-compliance with emission targets have been defined. Agreement on these draft decisions will establish the modalities for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol.

7. Progress is being made in promoting policy coherence with other conventions related to sustainable development. For example, a joint liaison group is being formed with the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, to assess linkages among the conventions and to promote cooperation and coherence. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel established under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer are addressing ways and means of limiting emissions of hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons, which have high global warming potential and are used as replacements for ozone-

depleting substances. The Intergovernmental Panel is preparing a technical paper on linkages among climate change, biodiversity and desertification.

IV. Institutional linkage

8. It may be recalled that the institutional linkage of the secretariat for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the United Nations was initially approved by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in 1995. It was decided that the Convention secretariat should be institutionally linked to the United Nations, while not being fully integrated into the work programme and management structure of any particular department or programme. The Conference also accepted arrangements proposed by the Secretary-General for the provision of administrative support to the Convention secretariat. Corresponding action was taken by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. As regards administrative support, the Executive Secretary, in agreement with the Department of Management of the United Nations Secretariat, has gradually taken over most of the responsibility for the financial and personnel administration of the Convention secretariat. On the financial side, audit payroll, investment, treasury and accounting are provided on a cost-per-service basis by the United Nations Office at Geneva. Further adjustments are being considered as the Convention secretariat seeks to ensure self-sufficiency in administrative matters.

9. The institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations, and the related administrative arrangements as they have developed, have provided and continue to provide a sound basis for the day-to-day functioning of the Convention secretariat, as well as the necessary bridge to the United Nations Secretariat at Headquarters. The arrangements clearly define the accountability of the Executive Secretary to the Conference of the Parties and to the Secretary-General and, at the same time, delineate the responsibility of the United Nations in providing the necessary support services as well as advice to the Executive Secretary, when requested. The Executive Secretary reports to the Secretary-General on administrative matters through the Under-Secretary-General for Management, and on other matters through the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

10. At the second part of its sixth session, the Conference of the Parties approved the continuation of the current institutional linkage of the Convention secretariat to the United Nations and the related administrative arrangements for a further five-year period, to be reviewed by both the General Assembly and the Conference of the Parties not later than 31 December 2006. It invited the Secretary-General to seek the endorsement of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session for the continuation of the institutional linkage for a further five years.

11. The Secretary-General has recommended that the General Assembly, pursuant to the request of the Conference of the Parties at its sixth session, approve the continuation of the current institutional linkage and related administrative arrangements for a further five-year period, to be reviewed by both bodies not later than 31 December 2006 (see A/56/385, para. 14).

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Agenda item 134 (b)
Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the proposed budget for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for the 12-month period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 (A/56/431). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General and the Officer-in-charge of the mission, who provided additional information.

2. UNIFIL was established by the Security Council in its resolution 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978 for operations in southern Lebanon. The mission's mandate has been extended several times by the Council, most recently in its resolution 1365 (2001) of 31 July 2001, by which the Council extended the mandate of the Force until 31 January 2002.

3. The Advisory Committee recalls that the Controller, in his letter dated 22 March 2001, informed the Committee that recent and prospective anticipated developments specific to certain peacekeeping missions (including UNIFIL) would likely affect their mandates, operational concepts, scope and scale of activities and related resource requirements. The Controller therefore requested that the Advisory Committee recommend to the General Assembly, as an interim measure, the granting of commitment authorization with an assessment in the amount of $99.5 million gross for the maintenance of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2001, pending submission of the detailed UNIFIL budget to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

4. On the recommendation of the Advisory Committee (see A/55/874, para. 10 (a)), the General Assembly, by its resolution 55/180 B of 14 June 2001, authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the amount of $99.5 million gross for the maintenance of UNIFIL for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2001, and decided that that amount should be assessed on Member States.

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5. The Committee notes that amounts totalling $3,262.0 million have been assessed on Member States in respect of UNIFIL since its inception to 31 December 2001 and that contributions received as at 30 September 2001 totalled $3,018.9 million. Outstanding balances amount to $243.1 million.

6. Cash balances of UNIFIL amounted to $107.7 million as at 30 September 2001. The Advisory Committee was informed that troop-contributing countries had received payments totalling $962,411,180 for the period from 1 December 1989 to 31 December 2000, and that an estimated amount of $47,691,892 was still due for the period from 1 January to 31 August 2001. The Committee was also informed that reimbursement to troop-contributing Member States was expected to be up to date by the end of the year, subject to the availability of cash.

7. The cost estimates submitted by the Secretary-General for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 amount to $136,816,100 gross ($132,983,100 net), inclusive of a $201,200 budgeted voluntary contribution. The latter relates to the contribution by the Government of Lebanon of the UNIFIL House in Beirut since February 1998. The Committee sought clarification with regard to the procedures to be followed in respect of budgeting for additional support account requirements related to UNIFIL and was informed that it was the intention of the Secretary-General, on the basis of whatever decision the General Assembly might take regarding the additional resources under the support account for peacekeeping operations, to prorate the financing of the additional support account resources approved among the upcoming revised financial resolutions for the missions, whose updated budgets will be considered during the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

8. This estimated requirement of $136,614,900 (net of voluntary contributions of $201,200) represents a decrease of $62,303,000, or 31.3 per cent in total resources (gross), compared with the resources of $198,917,900 approved for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. As shown in table 1 of the report, the proposed budget reflects a 26.7 per cent decrease under military personnel costs, a 9.7 per cent decrease under civilian personnel costs, a 56.7 per cent decrease in operational requirements, and a 3.9 per cent decrease in staff assessment costs; these reductions are partially offset by increases in other programmes.

9. As indicated in paragraph 11 of the report, the budget proposal is based on an average troop strength of 4,057 for the period in accordance with the Secretary-General's reconfiguration of the Force, which will be achieved through the non-replacement or reduction of units on the occasion of their normal rotations. On the basis of this approach, the troop strength of UNIFIL, which was planned at the level of 4,543 troops as at 31 August 2001, will gradually reduce to 3,613 by 31 May 2002 and will achieve the target level of 2,000 troops at the beginning of the next financial period (see A/56/431, annex I.C, para. 2).

10. UNIFIL will be supported by a civilian establishment of 491 staff, including 144 international (28 Professional, 82 Field Service and 34 General Service posts) and 339 local posts. The proposed civilian composition of UNIFIL reflects a decrease of 17 international posts and 41 local level posts. The Advisory Committee was informed that, as at 31 August 2001, there were 4,384 troops in UNIFIL; of the 161 authorized international staff posts, 134 were encumbered, and of the 380 authorized local staff posts, 350 were encumbered.

11. **The Advisory Committee points out that no clear information was provided in the budget document as to the rationale for the proposed composition of the civilian personnel of UNIFIL. The Committee points out that the reduction of 17 international staff posts does not seem to be proportionate with the reduction in military personnel. The Committee therefore expects that a further reduction in international staff will be proposed for the financial period starting 1 July 2002.**

12. The Advisory Committee notes that four Professional posts will be abolished in the Mine Action Coordination Cell and the related de-mining functions will be outsourced to contractors. The Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the de-mining programme of the Cell is supported by voluntary contributions and funded entirely through the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action, which is maintained by the Executive Office of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. A total contribution of $1,837,262 to the Trust Fund was received as at 1 October 2001. A donors' conference took place in Beirut on 21 May 2001 at which two Governments pledged a contribution of $50 million to support mine action in Lebanon; however, no payment has been made as of 11 October 2001.

13. The Committee notes from paragraph 11 of the report that, in accordance with the concept of operation, fewer resources are requested in the proposed budget for the maintenance and replacement of vehicles and major equipment and that the engineering effort will focus on renovation and maintenance of existing premises. **Nevertheless, in view of the downsizing of the Force, the Committee cautions against what appears to be excessive replacement of various types of equipment; for example, a provision of $140,260 is budgeted for replacement of 1,150 pieces of office furniture and a provision of $117,481 is budgeted for replacement of 40 per cent of the items of the current inventory of accommodation equipment.**

14. The Committee was informed that increased attention would be paid by the administration of UNIFIL to consolidating storage of spare parts in technologically advanced warehouses to be equipped with the Field Assets Control System. **The Committee supports the idea in principle, although it cautions that such warehouses should be established in the mission area only when fully justified from the operational point of view and when economically feasible.**

15. The Committee also notes from paragraph 11 of the report that a certain portion of the facilities in the area of operations will require new prefabricated structures that will be provided through the purchase of contingent-owned prefabricated units during the budgeted period. **In this connection, the Committee requests that, before a decision is made with respect to such a purchase, a study should be conducted to ensure that it is justified and efficient.**

16. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session in connection with the financing of UNIFIL are outlined in paragraph 5 of the report. **Taking into account its comments and observations in the paragraphs above, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposal.**

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Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Corrigendum

Paragraph 5, second line

For "since its inception" *read* "from 16 June 1993"

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